

**World Religions
Philosophy 120
Spring 2013**

Instructor: Philip M. Mouch

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Where: Bridges 162

When: M&W: 1:30-2:45

Office Hours: M&W: 10:30-1:00;

T&H: Noon-2:30; and by appointment

homepage: <http://web.mnstate.edu/mouch/120/120index.html>

Course Overview: This course will introduce you to five of the major religions of the world: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will look at the history, beliefs, practices, and culture of each of these religions in turn. While it would be difficult to fully experience any of these religions in the context of a class, especially a survey class such as this one, we will attempt to get a sense of each of these religions. This class is NOT an arena for conversion or preaching, either for students or the teacher. We are here to try to understand these different religions, not prove them right or wrong.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. Explain religious beliefs, basic moral teachings, and fundamental spiritual values and practices of Buddhism.
2. Explain religious beliefs, basic moral teachings, and fundamental spiritual values and practices of Christianity.
3. Explain religious beliefs, basic moral teachings, and fundamental spiritual values and practices of Judaism.
4. Explain religious beliefs, basic moral teachings, and fundamental spiritual values and practices of Hinduism.
5. Explain religious beliefs, basic moral teachings, and fundamental spiritual values and practices of Islam.
6. Identify one's cultural heritage in relation to religious traditions, knowing how it affects one's values and beliefs.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (MN Transfer Curriculum)

Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts

- Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
- Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
- Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
- Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.

Goal 07 - Human Diversity

- Understand the development of and the changing meanings of group identities in the United States' history and culture.
- Analyze their own attitudes, behaviors, concepts and beliefs regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
- Describe and discuss the experience and contributions (political, social, economic, etc.) of the many groups that shape American society and culture, in particular those groups that have suffered discrimination and exclusion.
- Demonstrate communication skills necessary for living and working effectively in a society with great population diversity

Reading Assignments and Texts: You should read the assignments before we discuss them in class. We will be discussing these assignments, and I expect you to be able to participate in the class. I strongly advise you to read through the assignments carefully and a couple of times. This will help you to understand the material and prepare you for the class meetings. Finally, be sure to bring the texts we are working with to class. The texts we will be reading in this class are as follows:

Michael Molloy Experiencing the World's Religions (5th edition), McGraw Hill (2010)
Course Packet

The course packet includes scriptural sources as well as other materials for each religion we will be reading. You should read these materials in conjunction with the readings in Molloy's text.

If you are interested in find more materials and sources on the religions we will be studying, I encourage you to look at the following website:

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/index.htm>

Evaluation:

- (a) There will be five in-class exams, one for each section of the course. Each exam will cover one religion, and they will be worth 50 points each.
- (b) Your grade will be calculated by dividing your point total by 250 points, and then assigned a letter grade according to the following scale: 90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, and below 60 = F. I will use pluses and minuses for borderline grades.

POLICIES:

- (1) Exam dates are listed below. I will not allow any make-up exams unless there is some good reason (it should be a true emergency – not a family vacation or birth of a niece or nephew). In any event, written documentation will be required. You should get in touch with me right away if such a situation arises. The final exam will be held the day listed on the syllabus. Please plan accordingly.
- (2) You are permitted to have three unexcused absences. Your overall grade for the course will be lowered by two percentage points for each unexcused absence beyond the first three. As with exams and assignments, excused absences will only be given for emergencies and only when there is written documentation.
- (3) You are expected to be in class and have done the reading for the day. It is simple courtesy to be in class on time and in your seat. If you have to be late for some reason, please enter the room and take your seat quietly, so as not to disturb the class. PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING CELLPHONES, PAGERS, AND IPODS). Do not engage in text messaging during class. Do not engage your neighbor in conversation during class. If you text or engage in personal discussions during class, I will ask you to stop. If you repeat the behavior, I will ask you to leave the room. Finally, do not stand up and walk out in the middle of the class period. This is distracting and rude to the other students and me. If you must leave early for some reason, please talk to me before class and sit near the door.

Schedule: Below you will find the dates we begin each our five religions and the dates for the exams. These dates are tentative. I may have to make changes to these dates as the semester goes on. I will make any necessary changes in class.

DATES:

READING:

January 14 Hinduism: Chapters 1 & 3 & Course Packet

JANUARY 21 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No Class)

JANUARY 30 – HINDUISM EXAM

February 4 Buddhism: Chapter 4 & Course Packet

FEBRUARY 20 – BUDDHISM EXAM

February 25 Judaism: Chapter 8 & Course Packet

MARCH 11-15 – SPRING BREAK

MARCH 20 – JUDAISM EXAM

MARCH 25 Christianity: Chapter 9 & Course Packet

APRIL 1 - NO CLASS

APRIL 10 – CHRISTIANITY EXAM

April 15 Islam: Chapter 10 & Course Packet

MAY 6 – LAST DAY OF CLASSES

FINAL EXAM (ISLAM): TUESDAY, MAY 14th @ 3:00 pm

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Director of Disability Services at 477-4318 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), Flora Frick 154 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Information regarding Disability Services is available at <http://web.mnstate.edu/disability/>